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ABSTRACT

A student evaluation of teaching in an Air Force Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC) program was designed and implemented without formal validation. This study addressed the usefulness of the previous evaluation and whether the questions were the most valuable for students and faculty, especially for the improvement of teaching. An interview instrument and protocol were developed based on an extensive literature review. Formative and summative committees were used to provide feedback during the interview development stage. Interviews were conducted with the instructors of freshman, sophomore, and senior ROTC courses and two cadets from each of the four academic levels, freshman through senior. Interviews identified important areas of concern about the Air Force ROTC teaching and courses. Findings suggest that the previous evaluation instrument contained two questions unrelated to stakeholder concern and lacked questions related to six areas of concern. It was not considered to be an effective method of evaluating teaching and course concerns. Thirteen appendixes contain supplemental information, the interview protocol, and interview findings. (Contains 2 tables and 26 references.) (SLD)

AN EVALUATION OF THE MID-SEMESTER STUDENT
EVALUATION OF TEACHING AT A UNIVERSITY
AIR FORCE RESERVE OFFICER TRAINING CORPS DETACHMENT

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ABSTRACT

While the Air Force ROTC (AFROTC) Detachment at a large northeastern university received an "Excellent" rating on a recent inspection, the staff continued to feel there was room for continuous improvement as the highest rating is "Outstanding." Before the inspection, a new tool, the mid-semester student evaluation of teaching, was designed and implemented; however, it only received a brief evaluation by the education officer, which lacked formal validation. Therefore, the problem addressed in this research project was that the faculty of the detachment was unable to effectively alter teaching deficiencies before the end of a semester.

The purpose of this study was to determine if the previous questions within the mid-semester student evaluation of teaching were the most valuable for the students and faculty. There was one significant research question involved with this study. "Is the current student evaluation of teaching an effective measure of teaching quality as perceived by both students and faculty?"

An interview instrument and protocol were developed based on an extensive literature review. Formative and summative committees were utilized consisting of experienced and

unbiased academics external to the Air Force department. These committees provided continuous feedback during the study's interview development stage. The interview instrument was pilot tested and implemented for use with faculty and students participating in AFROTC education at the university.

The interviews conducted resulted in the compilation of important areas of concern, as noted by the faculty and students, about the AFROTC teaching and courses. When the raw data was compared to the current literature, these areas became evident and quantifiable. At the conclusion of data analysis it was determined that the previous evaluation system contained two questions unrelated to stakeholder concern and lacked six areas of concern, thus resulting in an ineffective method of evaluating teaching and course concerns.

The desire for feedback is an important aspect in the performance of any employee. This is potentially more important when the job involves other people instead of inanimate products. Both students and teachers retain various opinions on what is important in the range of educational feedback. Due to the variability in opinions, it is important to include input from all stakeholders. Beyond the need for stakeholder involvement, is the need to continuously evaluate results. No program is perfect, thus leaving room for improvement after implementation.

The assessed program of teaching evaluation discussed will positively influence the detachment at the university and should result in improved instructor confidence and student development. It was recommended that the current teaching evaluation system receives necessary changes, a follow-on evaluation, continuous improvement, and is shared with other AFROTC detachments.

Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

The United States Air Force mandates the Air Force Reserve Officer Training Corps (AFROTC) program, located at over 142 colleges and universities, with the task of providing qualified officer accession. The AFROTC program is provided to students who must complete a variety of courses before becoming an Air Force officer. Active duty Air Force officers, from diverse operational assignments in an array of career fields, are assigned to teach and oversee these courses. Examples of the instructors' career fields include pilot, engineer, aircraft or missile maintenance, and intelligence. While the active duty officers assigned to these teaching positions have a wide range of experiences, they often have little or no experience as teachers.

Nature of the Problem

The AFROTC detachment at a large northeastern four-year university found success in its current operations through the attainment of an "excellent" rating on an Operational Readiness Inspection conducted by the Air Force's Air Education and Training Command. The education program, individually, received the same rating; however, there was room for improvement as the highest rating is "outstanding." A new tool, the mid-semester student evaluation of teaching, was designed and implemented (Appendix A); however, it only received a brief evaluation by the education officer, which lacked formal validation. The education officer was unable to state that the program was valid based on the needs of the detachment faculty and students. Therefore, the problem was that the faculty of the detachment was unable to effectively alter teaching deficiencies before the end of a semester.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to determine if the previous questions within the mid-semester student evaluation of teaching were the most valuable for the students and faculty. This study helped determine the effectiveness of the previous program utilized by the detachment and its ability to provide the faculty with functional information.

Significance to the Institution

The majority of professors in other academic areas at the university hold a Doctoral Degree; however, instructors assigned to AFROTC do not hold similar credentials. This fact places AFROTC faculty at a distinct professional disadvantage as it relates to comparative instructional effectiveness. As part of a traditional Doctoral program, candidates often spend many hours teaching classes under the tutelage of an experienced faculty member, thereby accumulating practical experience. In an effort to maintain a similar level of academic aptitude, AFROTC must provide various instruments of quality assessment so that their students perceive the instructors as the academic equivalent of the university's professors. While a system of measuring effectiveness was in place, it had not been validated through rigorous research. Therefore, this researcher believed that the current system must be validated in an effort to ensure quality instruction takes place in the AFROTC programs at the university.

Research Question

This study answered the following research question: "Is the current student evaluation of teaching an effective measure of teaching quality as perceived by both students and faculty?"

Definition of Terms

For the purpose of this study, the following terms need further clarification.

Assignment. This term refers to the particular job a member of the Air Force is currently doing or going to in the future.

Cadet. This title refers to a college student seeking an Air Force commission through the ROTC program. A cadet is legally considered a college student and not covered by the Uniform Code of Military Justice.

Detachment. The Air Force uses this term as the organizational name for a ROTC unit at a college or university. A detachment serves its host school plus a number of other institutions.

Education Officer. The AFROTC faculty member who is responsible for continual staff development and evaluation.

Officer. This is a commissioned military member appointed by the President of the United States.

Operational. This is the unofficial designation used to denote a unit, within the Air Force, that performs duties directly related to the mission of the Air Force. Examples are aircraft and nuclear missile units.

ROTC. The Reserve Officer Training Corps is a program designed by the Department of Defense to produce commissioned officers for the various military services of the United States.

Chapter 2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Introduction

Often the word "evaluation" rings a note of concern across a teacher's ear. This concern may result from the fear of criticism, the loss of a coveted tenure position, or even removal from a job. Fortunately, this is the evaluation of the past. Recent uses of faculty evaluations, especially in the higher education setting, have focused on teacher development (Mayo, 1997, p. 1). Instead of forming a file of teacher criticism, the evaluation process now forms a veritable textbook of teaching education. This literature review takes a deeper look into the realm of student evaluations of teaching. Initially, the review presents evidence from both faculty and student points of view. Secondly, the review briefly presents information on specific areas of teaching effectiveness. Finally, the review will present information concerning the needs assessment and the interview method of evaluation.

Evaluation Concerns

Viewing the vast dynamics of the classroom environment, it is not difficult to see that two predominate elements include the teacher and the student. Due to the nature of this interaction between two people, one must endeavor to seek an understanding from both perspectives.

Faculty Concerns

Accountability is the name of the game when it comes to performance. This single word has been a driving factor in evaluating faculty at the end of each term, which often is the dominant method of quantifying teaching competency (Gullatt & Ballard, 1998, p. 4; Hightower,

1998, p. 1; Mertler, 1999, p. 4). The vast body of research showed varying levels of faculty concern and support for the use of these evaluations to determine teaching quality.

Hightower (1998) found that student evaluators may not view their comments as seriously as faculty or administrators would like. This is a special concern when an instructor's career may be at risk (p. 2). This lack of seriousness is evidenced in the following student statement: "The TA steadily improved throughout the course...I think he started drinking, and it really loosened him up" (Hightower, 1998, p. 2). In conjunction with the factor of seriousness was a concern about whether students are being honest in their remarks. Mertler (1999) found teachers were accepting of student feedback but questioned how honestly students were actually commenting. The teachers felt an evaluation would not be useful unless the students were making honest comments (p. 8). However, to a greater degree than student-related factors, a lack of communication between faculty and administrators provided the largest contribution to faculty concern (Gullatt & Ballard, 1998, p. 1).

Gullatt & Ballard (1998) found a relation between faculty acceptance of student evaluations and the support received from administrators (p. 5). They noted that the improvement of teaching, and not the evaluation of faculty performance, should be the driving theme behind teaching evaluations (p. 1). Andrews (1997) considered the use of Total Quality Management (TQM) techniques in the evaluation of teaching. TQM is a business-oriented theory that focuses on continuous improvement and management at all levels (p. 1). Recently, many colleges have attempted to introduce these values into the evaluation of faculty. As with many new theories, there was some dissension among the faculty. Concerns included the ability to view the student as a customer, interference with teaching expertise, and the threat to academic freedom (p. 2). Though these represented real concerns, many administrations found

ways to overcome them, to the benefit of the faculty. In-service training and faculty involvement in the TQM process were popular methods. Another important factor was the method in which administrators work with the faculty. The administration must listen effectively, provide constructive feedback, and engage in joint goal setting with the faculty (p. 3).

Through communication and involvement, many faculty members became excited about the use of student evaluations of teaching and looked forward to the results (Mertler, 1999, p. 7). Mertler found very positive reactions from teachers he used in a study of student evaluations of teaching with all teachers providing ratings of "extremely" or "somewhat useful" (p. 8). In addition to the usefulness, he found appropriateness rated equally high with 83% rating "extremely appropriate," and 17% rating the evaluation "somewhat appropriate" (p. 8). The same teachers, at a 75% rate, stated they found evaluation use as feasible and 64% would use the survey twice per academic year (p. 9). Mertler found the key to the evaluation success was the opportunity for the faculty to provide input on the instrument. "It is crucial to note that...they were given opportunities to review the draft of the SE3T [title of instrument] instrument for purposes of providing suggestions or revisions..." (Mertler, 1999, p. 5). Brackbill (1996) supports this finding in his implementation of teaching evaluations. His success came when the teachers were assured that only teachers would see the evaluation results. This established an environment of quality improvement over performance evaluation (p. 1).

Student Concerns

Research consistently showed that students are very interested in what they learn, how they learn it, and from whom they learn it. Students are no longer passive listeners in the classroom; they are becoming active partners with knowledgeable faculty (Osborne, 1998, p. 4). "Essentially, the good teacher tells us what is out there to learn, shows an enthusiasm for

acquiring knowledge...and then turns us loose to learn at our own pace..." (Belton, 1996, p. 1). Belton recounted that students want their teacher to bring a subject to life through active learning as opposed to drab readings from a textbook (p. 1). In concert with the prevailing research, Belton called for the use of students to evaluate teaching effectiveness (p. 2).

Research studies among the literature supported the varying nature of effectiveness factors, as well as the ability to measure teaching effectiveness (Jirovec, Ramanathan & Alvarez, 1998, p. 1; Osborne, 1998, p. 4; Sheehan and Duprey, 1999, p. 3). In their study of psychology students, at both the graduate and undergraduate levels, Sheehan and Duprey (1999) used a 27-item instrument and found five items strongly reflecting students' desires. These items included lecture information, assessment tools, instructor preparation, interesting lecture format, and challenging material (p. 3). An interesting result, though, was that students rated their desire to take another class from the instructors lower than all other items, even though the students rated the instructors as highly effective (p. 4). Similar to the Sheehan and Duprey study, Jirovec, et al. (1998) performed a correlation study on social work student response to teaching evaluations. They also found strong correlations with teaching effectiveness and student ratings on organization, grading, and rapport for students (p. 4). Interestingly, though, is the finding that students preferred elective courses (considered more popular) over required courses for the major (p. 4). This finding was slight, however, and the more concrete variables of organization, grading and rapport were stronger predictors of effectiveness (p. 5). "The key predictor of student ratings was organizational skill of the instructor.... Students are telling us that an organized approach to teaching contributes to better education" (Jirovec, et al., 1998, pp. 5-6).

The classroom should be a learning community that is open and capable of change. Clear feedback can allow instructors to expand their awareness and understanding, and to grow and

change. The feedback loop in the wider learning community allows for a continuous flow of information that can be incorporated by the instructor to improve and change the system.

(Osborne, 1998, p. 2).

Teaching Effectiveness

Consistent with research among faculty and students, the literature identified specific characteristics that are indicative of an effective instructor. Examples of such characteristics included class organization and student interaction (Jackson, Teal, Raines, Nansel, Force, & Burdsal, 1999, pp. 7-8; Shannon & Twale, 1998, p. 446; Young & Shaw, 1999, p. 678).

Instructors who display these, and similar characteristics, were often viewed as successful and effective teachers. The body of literature reviewed for this research helped answer important questions relevant to narrowing the most appropriate teaching characteristics. Questions such as "What defines an effective instructor?" and "What are the characteristics of an instructor defined as effective?" were reviewed.

In an effort to determine the characteristics of an effective instructor, many researchers have utilized student surveys. These characteristics included learning or course value, concern for students, course organization, fairness, difficulty of course, and workload (Jackson, et al., 1999, pp. 7-8; Shannon & Twale, 1998, p. 446; Young & Shaw, 1999, p. 678). This research showed a consistent pattern of responses from students, which define an instructor's effectiveness. Each of the above researchers also found additional characteristics not consistent among their studies, which included motivating students, effective communication, group interaction, enthusiasm, and breadth of coverage (Shannon & Twale, 1998, p. 446; Young & Shaw, 1999, p. 678). By using these characteristics, it is believed that a topically knowledgeable person could develop into an effective instructor. A question to consider though is "Must all the

characteristics be present?" Some researchers think not, for example, Young and Shaw (1999) found that instructors could have certain deficiencies; nevertheless, they still receive high ratings from students. They posited that an effective teacher is one who can compensate for weak areas by demonstrating outstanding skills in other vital areas of teaching (p. 683).

The drama of classroom life is a multilayered, multifaceted fabric of experiences that, to the untrained outsider, must seem like a crazy quilt.... Answers reduce anxieties and restore a sense of inner security. Classroom problems elevate teachers' anxieties. Having to decide what to do, choosing from many possible courses of action, is a high-risk endeavor, full of potential hazards. This is the stuff that keeps teachers awake nights and, when they finally sleep, makes for disturbing dreams. (Wassermann, 1999, p. 2)

The intense nature of such a multifaceted environment may manifest itself in the ways instructors feel about themselves and their ability to teach. Therefore, confidence in one's abilities is an important factor when considering teaching effectiveness. Fritz and Miller-Heyl (1995) found this to be true in their study of teacher self-efficacy. That is, an instructor who is confident in his or her abilities will create a cycle of self-motivation (p. 1). "Teaching efficacy leads to a greater willingness to try new methods, which may result in higher achievement in students, which, in turn, increases a teacher's sense of efficacy and willingness to continue to expand greater efforts to help students learn" (Fritz & Miller-Heyl, 1995, p. 2). In essence, a willingness to try novel techniques is perceived as favorable by students and their positive feedback motivates the instructor to try new methods. They found significant increases in the confidence level and self-satisfaction in teachers receiving training compared to a non-trained group, which showed significant decline (p. 7). This level of confidence goes beyond the teacher's subject matter competence and suggests that teachers must know how to teach their content area and subject matter.

Needs Assessment

While the above literature presented relevant information to the use of student evaluations of teaching, it is also important to review techniques for determining their ability to meet the needs of the students and faculty who utilize those evaluations. According to Varcoe (1994) the needs assessment is a tool useful to determine the difference between what a program provides and what its constituents need (p. 9). "It can be effective in determining specific needs and using them to focus development of approaches for inclusion in the design (or redesign) of programs" (Varcoe, 1994, p. 9).

Kemp, Morrison and Ross (1998) support the views of Varcoe and find the needs assessment as an effective tool in both identifying a problem and choosing a solution (p. 21). In essence, when a problem exists, important needs of individual or groups are no longer met. These needs are seen as the difference between what the current situation is and how the organization's constituents feel how the situation should be (p. 21). Kemp, et al. viewed these needs from six various definitions. Normative needs are those based on some form of data based on national statistics (p. 21). If the organization's needs are compared to some external group, the needs are considered comparative (p. 22). When needs are not compared to some known factor, yet still evident in an individual the need is considered felt (p. 23). When those felt needs are stated in some means they are considered expressed (p.23). If needs may occur in the future, yet are not currently felt or expressed, they are considered anticipated (p. 24). Finally, an emergent situation within an organization that produces a gap is considered a critical incident need (p. 24).

Champion (2000) provides further support to the existence of needs and the use of a needs assessment for determining gaps. He views the assessment tool as an opportunity to not

only scan the environment for existing problems, but also as a tool to obtain vital information from those involved in the current needs gap (p. 1).

One of the commandments of professional development is: Thou shalt not plan programs in a vacuum....Adult learners want to be involved in making decisions about their learning and their involvement has been proven over and over to enrich the results (Champion, 2000, p. 1).

Champion further noted that the conduct of a needs assessment is an important aspect in its success. Designers must overcome the perception that needs assessments are formal and mundane and pursue a new approach where the process is informal and meets multiple needs (p. 1). An effective tool in meeting this need can be found in the face-to-face interview (Champion, 2000, p. 2; Kemp, et al., 1998, p. 23).

Interview Methodology

The interview method of data collection allows the researcher to obtain the specific needs necessary for the assessment. In addition, it allows the researcher to provide important clarification or seek further details, when needed, during the data collection stage (NSU, 1994, p. 4). Kemp, et al. (1998) posited that an interview method allows the respondents to express their needs in a low anxiety environment (p. 23). "Felt needs are best expressed through interviews and questionnaires. Face-to-face interviews are often more effective, since the designer can alleviate anxieties and probe for additional details" (Kemp, et al., 1998, p. 23). Unfortunately, interviews do possess various disadvantages, which may include high cost, increased time and effort, and lack of availability of necessary respondents (NSU, 1994, p. 4). However, if performed correctly, the interview methodology can produce important results.

Design

The design of the interview is a delicate procedure resulting in an instrument that will retrieve qualitative information from individuals. LeCompte (2000) stated that an important aspect of the interview instrument is the lack of any bias (p. 1). People, as human beings, tend to approach their feeling with a sense of ownership regarding various situations. They may answer questions based solely on the topic (p. 1). Therefore, the researcher must understand the instrument and the data desired from the respondent when performing a needs assessment through interviews (King, 1997, p. 1). "The questions form a script for us to use, but like every good actor, we should know our lines well before the curtain rises" (Dilley, 2000, p. 3).

In designing the instrument, King (1997) considers various elements as important to the success of the data collection. The interviewer should not only intimately understand the elements of the questions but also reserve the ability to alter them for understanding. In addition, design the interview with an understanding of what questions may lead to potential bias. Furthermore, the instrument must be understood by the interviewer to provide confidence to the respondents in the interviewer's knowledge (p. 2). While King places emphasis on the interviewer, Sorenson (1999) goes one step further and focuses on the respondents. His predominate concern was that the instrument be designed with the respondent in mind (p. 2). "Our interview designs must acknowledge that our field teams are facing the real live consumer, not a paper ideal" (Sorenson, 1999, p. 2).

Dilley (2000) provides further support to designing the interview around various respondents. Gathering information about the topics surrounding the interview as well as information about the respondents is an important aspect of design (p. 1). This includes a research of literature surrounding the area of concern. Understanding the discipline in which the

interview resides provides important information on what questions to ask and how to ask them (p. 2). "The questions we ask should create a bridge between person and report, between content and form as well as (background) information and (personal) experience" (Dilley, 2000, p. 2).

Conduct

The body of current research points to many factors in conducting a successful interview. King (1997) posited that interviewers must consider carefully how the interview is conducted. In the beginning, the interviewer should spend time to create a relationship with the respondent. The questions should then be asked as they are on the instrument with various probes for detail. However, the interviewer must avoid biasing the sessions by providing possible answers (p. 1).

Dilley (2000) supports the notions set forth by King and provides further support to the concern of the overall relationship created. Dilley's research stipulates that the respondent feel comfortable during the interview, thus allowing the interviewer to access deeper feelings (p. 3). In order to accomplish this, the interviewer must establish the role of the listener. Through intense listening, the interviewer can often determine the true meanings behind what a respondent is feeling (p. 6). "One rule of thumb is for interviewers to talk 20 percent of the time during the interview, and listen 80 percent" (Dilley, 2000, p. 5).

In addition to establishing rapport, listening offers the interviewer the ability to alter the course of the interview if necessary. The interviewer must compare what the respondent states, to what the interviewer knows from previous knowledge. This will allow the interviewer to make qualitative decisions on when to alter the course of the interview protocol (Dilley, 2000, p. 4; King, 1997, pp. 2-3). This alteration is considered probing, where the interviewer asks further questions based on the responses given. King (1997) states that the correct way to probe during an interview is to ask questions that clarify responses or insure that perceptions are correct (p. 3).

Probing questions by the interviewer should not provide possible answers, opinions, or guide the respondent's answers in any way (p. 3). Often these actions lead to a biasing factor within an interview session (p. 3).

The purpose of the interview is for the interviewer to seek necessary information from a respondent. Unfortunately, there is an opportunity for bias to enter the session. When the interviewer provides specific answer possibilities, or gives their personal opinion about the questions posed, the interview becomes biased. In this case, the interviewer is using his or her knowledge to guide the respondent in a pre-determined direction, which is often that desired by the researcher (King, 1997, pp. 2-3). Avoiding these behaviors as well as providing adequate response time will lead to a more valid interview session (p. 3).

Analysis

The use of an interview methodology allows the researcher to obtain various informational pieces from respondents, thereby resulting in qualitative information. This qualitative information provides a rich compilation of experiences and feelings, which the researcher can utilize to determine patterns of belief or behavior (Dilley, 2000, p. 2). To find these patterns the researcher must choose an appropriate population as the test sample. Once the sample is chosen, and the interview provided, the researcher must then analyze the data.

Various methods are available for determining the appropriate sample to analyze, including both random and non-random. When utilizing random samples, a probable sample provides all members of the population an equal opportunity to participate while a systematic sample chooses participants based on a particular counting number, such as every 10th person. A further random method is stratified, in which a certain population of participants is randomly chosen based on their percentage of the total population (NSU, 1994, p. 9). Non-random choices

include convenience and quota samples and lack the random nature of the previous methods. Convenience samples are based on the researcher's ability to utilize a particular sample, such as all co-workers or students in a particular setting. Quota samples are similar to the stratified methodology, however the population itself is chosen based on convenience and the percentage drawn from that group (p. 10). When dealing with needs assessments, the non-random sample may provide the most benefit to the researcher, thus the sample size may be small. However, Kemp, et al. (1998) noted that the sample size should be chosen based on the desired population. Therefore, a needs assessment of a small population can be just as significant as a larger population provided the sample is representative of those possessing the needs (p. 27).

Once the sample is chosen and the data collected, the researcher must analyze all information, thereby determining the results (LeCompte, 2000, p. 1). LeCompte considers analysis as the building of pieces of information into a logical conclusion. Smaller pieces are combined into larger ideas, which are linked into end results (p. 2). Analysis is accomplished in five steps, tidying up, finding items, creating sets, creating patterns, and assembling structures (pp. 3-6).

After all data is collected, the researcher must compile all the information into a logical system. This may include cataloging, labeling, or indexing in an effort to make the data easier to review (LeCompte, 2000, p. 3). Secondly, the researcher finds the items of interest in support of the research. This may include frequency of responses, responses omitted by the respondents, or significant item declared directly by the respondents during the data collection (pp. 3-4). Once data items are determined, the third step, creating items, is utilized to place the data into large groups for comparison and subdivided as necessary (pp. 3-4). These items may include demographic data, ranking, opinions, or feedback from the respondents (NSU, 1994, p. 6). "The

purpose of these activities is to clump together items that are similar or go together" (LeCompte, 2000, p. 4). The various items may then be analyzed together for data patterns relevant to the research (p. 5). Finally, the patterns are combined to create the final descriptive structure of the data, thereby offering evidence to support or refute the research questions (p. 6).

Analysis that is meticulously done, based on clearly articulated theories, and responsive to research questions can be good analysis. However, to create good research findings, analysis must also yield results that are meaningful to the people for whom they are intended and described in a language they understand. (LeCompte, 2000, p. 7)

Summary

The above literature review brought three main points to the forefront of this study. First, the review showed that both faculty and students desire the use of student evaluations of teaching as a method of improving classroom quality. However, faculty members often have concerns over how seriously the students take the evaluations. Secondly, the review demonstrated that identifiable measurements of teaching effectiveness exist and teachers who understand them are more successful in the classroom. Finally, the review presented evidence that the interview method of evaluation is an appropriate instrument to ensure valid results in a needs assessment.

Chapter 3

METHODOLOGY AND PROCEDURES

Data Collection and Analysis

As a beginning step to the evaluation process, a review of current theoretical knowledge was completed. This review focused on current theories relating to student evaluations of teaching as well as faculty and student perceptions of those instruments. Furthermore, literature surrounding the needs assessment as an evaluation tool was reviewed. Finally, the researcher conducted a review of literature relating to structured interviews as a system of data collection.

Second, after a thorough review of relevant research was completed, criteria for success were established. A review of current theories, and the use of a formative committee, aided in selecting criteria. The formative committee provided initial and continuing direction throughout the design phase of the interview instrument. This committee consisted of an Enrollment Counselor at a community college and a Director of Consumer Relationship Management at a large Health Management Organization. The researcher chaired the formative committee (Appendix B). This committee of experts provided consistent oversight of the interview design process and they reviewed initial design, proposed changes, reviewed drafts, and provided other necessary feedback concerning the interview instrument. An informational letter was sent to committee members upon approval of the project proposal (Appendix C).

Third, an initial draft of the interview instrument was designed, which consisted of all appropriate questions as determined necessary by the formative committee. The formative committee reviewed the draft to ensure its consistency with the stated criteria. Following this approval the final draft was created for submission to the summative committee. The formative

committee members were presented with an appreciation gift, consisting of a printed card and a holiday candle in a jar, valued at \$3.00.

Fourth, validation of the interview instrument and its criteria were performed by the use of a summative committee. This committee consisted of an Associate Professor of Naval Science at a private university, and the Assistant Academic Dean at a religion-affiliated college. The researcher chaired the summative committee (Appendix B). This committee reviewed the interview instrument to ensure it met the previously determined criteria. Feedback from the summative committee was compiled and implemented, resulting in a final design for the interview instrument. An informational letter was sent to all committee members upon approval of the proposal (Appendix C). The summative committee members were presented with an appreciation gift, consisting of a printed card and a holiday candle in a jar, valued at \$3.00.

Fifth, the interview instrument was pilot tested, after validation by the summative committee. The researcher provided the interview to one AFROTC staff member, one under-class cadet, and one upper-class cadet. The selection of respondents was accomplished using a quota basis, selecting one officer staff member, the first under-class cadet, and first upper-class cadet present in the cadet lounge when the researcher entered the lounge. This provided a similar composition to the actual interview pool (NSU, 1994, p. 10). Before beginning the interview questions, the researcher explained the purpose of the study and the instrument, and provided an informed consent letter (Appendix D) for each to review and sign. During the interview, the researcher recorded the respondents' answers to the questions as well as their statements about the quality of the interview instrument and session (p. 28). This was accomplished utilizing both written notes and a tape recorder. Upon completion, the researcher offered each respondent a candy bar valued at \$1.00.

Sixth, the validated interview instrument was implemented as the means of evaluating the current mid-semester student evaluation of teaching. The interview pool consisted of the instructors of the freshmen, sophomore, and senior AFROTC courses, and two cadets from each of the freshmen through senior AFROTC courses. The junior-year instructor was not interviewed, as he is the researcher. There is only one instructor for each academic year; therefore, they were chosen by convenience and not randomly. However, the cadet respondents were chosen randomly through a volunteer process. The researcher asked the Cadet Commander (cadet in charge of all other cadets) to request volunteers from each year group. He then chose two cadets from each year group with the researcher absent during the selection process. Throughout each interview session, the purpose of the session was explained and a consent form was signed (Appendix D). The researcher posed the questions as prescribed in the instrument's directions. In addition, the researcher took hand-written notes and utilized a tape recorder during the interview for analysis purposes. Upon completion, the researcher offered each respondent a candy bar valued at no more than \$1.00.

Seventh, the researcher, upon completion of all interviews, tabulated the interview responses. After reading the handwritten notes and comparing them to the audio tape recordings, the researcher compiled the responses by question and respondent type (Appendix L). The types of responses were then organized into key concepts, based on literature and researcher determination, and scored based on their frequency of mention by the respondents (Appendix M). The frequencies were then compared to frequency averages for all questions in their respective categories (Instructor Related or Course Related). This comparison allowed the analysis of high or low need areas. A simple average was computed for each category, Instructor Related and Course Related, which quantifies the average number of response made per area of

concern. For the areas registering concern (question 1-2 and 4-5), response rates were considered high-importance (greater than 3 above average), average-importance (-3 to +3 of the average) and low-importance (less than 3 below average) above the average. For the areas registering no concern (questions 3 and 6) response rates below the average were representative of areas of unimportance to the respondents.

Eighth, as the final step to the evaluation process, the data was compared to the current mid-semester student evaluation of teaching (Appendix A), to determine if it met the determined needs. A final report was completed, documenting the needs of the faculty and students.

Assumptions

It was initially assumed that the formative and summative committees chosen were capable of providing objective and knowledgeable feedback to the interview design process, and measurement of validity based on the established criteria. It was also assumed that current theories of student evaluations of teaching were the most current and useful for AFROTC faculty members. Finally, it was assumed that the interview respondents provided honest answers to the valid interview questions and did not attempt to purposefully deceive the interviewer.

Limitations

The final product is limited to use only by the AFROTC Detachment at the university of study. The student evaluation of teaching validated may not be sufficiently general to allow its use in traditional academic departments. Future regulatory changes by the Air Force or the university may alter the evaluation results.

Chapter 4

RESULTS

To evaluate the current mid-semester student evaluation of teaching program, an eight-step process was utilized. The first step included a thorough review of the related literature. This review revealed evidence for the use of such teaching evaluations to support the needs of both students and faculty. While both students and faculty entertain concerns about the use of teaching evaluation instruments, the general notion is that their benefits far outweigh any disadvantages (Belton, 1996, p. 2; Hightower, 1998, p. 2; Mertler, 1999, pp. 7-8; Osborne, 1998, p. 4). The literature also supported the notion that teaching effectiveness is a measurable aspect and distinct qualities are evident among effective teachers (Jackson, et al., 1999, pp. 7-8; Shannon & Twale, 1998, p. 446; Young & Shaw, 1999, p. 678). Use of these instruments allows students to express their needs as well as providing teachers with an opportunity to improve their skill. The logical conclusion of this observation is that both students and faculty possess various needs within the teaching environment and those needs are measurable. Therefore, a researcher may utilize a needs assessment to determine the effectiveness of a designed teaching evaluation instrument (Kemp, et al. 1998, p. 21). In doing so, the interview methodology is likely the best methods for determining the needs exhibited by various constituents in the learning process (Kemp, et al., 1998, p. 23; NSU, 1994, p. 4). Based on this literature, the researcher chose the interview methodology to evaluate the effectiveness of the current mid-semester student evaluation of teaching utilized by the AFROTC Detachment at the university.

The second step of the methodology involved the formation of a committee to provide guidance and direction in creating the interview instrument. Initial feedback on criteria for creating a successful instrument was similar among committee members. The researcher

obtained feedback using an email questionnaire (Appendix E). The universal themes included the level of comfort and confidence between interviewer and respondent, as well as concerns surrounding potential biasing factors. The committee received an initial draft of criteria based on their input and the literature review (Appendix F). The committee approved the criteria with no changes (Appendix G).

The third step of the methodology involved the creation of the interview instrument. Referring to the criteria, the interview questions, as well as a protocol of conduct were created. The initial draft of the interview instrument was sent to the formative committee for their review, with their responses tabulated on a standardized feedback form (Appendixes H, I, & J). A concern surfaced over the analysis of the instrument, and the use of a tape recorder was added to the use of hand-written notes for data collection.

The fourth step of the methodology began the validation stage of the project. The final draft, as determined by the formative committee was submitted to the summative committee for their review and validation with their responses tabulated on a standardized feedback form (Appendixes I, J, & K). The committee validated the instrument stating that it met all criteria established through, and approved by the formative committee. One committee member emphasized the confidentiality of respondent answers, since a department faculty member (researcher) was used to conduct the interview. However, he felt that the questions were benign enough to elicit fair and honest answers from both student and faculty respondents. The other member elicited concern over the need for a blind study; however, this was not considered a concern among the current literature and was therefore not added to the protocol.

The fifth step of the methodology consisted of a pilot test of the designed and committee-validated instrument. This step allowed the researcher to determine that the instrument met all

criteria established and validated by the committees (Appendix G). Meeting the first design criterion, the interview was conducted face-to-face with only the interviewer and respondent present. Evidence supporting the second design criterion was found in that all respondents stated they felt the instrument allowed them to express their needs as they relate to the classroom environment. Meeting the final design criterion, all respondents stated that they never felt biased toward a particular answer. While the researcher had to provide clarification on certain questions, the respondents stated they were never provided information that could be construed as a response example. The first conduct criterion was met in that all respondents stated they felt comfortable during the interview and believed that their responses would be kept in confidence. Each respondent scheduled his or her own time to meet with the interviewer, thereby meeting the second design criterion, convenience. Finally, the questions were initially read to each respondent in the same manner, however the interviewer reworded questions at the respondents request, thereby meeting the third conduct criterion. The pilot test resulted in no changes to the instrument; therefore, the researcher considered the instrument a valid measure of student and faculty needs.

The interview instrument was implemented during the sixth step. Interviews were conducted at the AFROTC Detachment on the university's campus. The interviews occurred over the period of 1-8 December 2000. After volunteering for the interviews, all respondents provided a time they could meet with the researcher at their convenience. At the interview session, all respondents signed an informed consent letter (Appendix D) and were given an opportunity to ask any general questions about the study. The researcher reiterated the confidentiality of their responses and recorded all responses through handwritten notes and a

tape recorder. The interview was conducted according to directions set forth in the interview instrument (Appendix I) and respondents answered all questions posed by the researcher.

During the seventh step of the methodology, the researcher reviewed the interview responses and tabulated the data based on frequency of mention (Appendix M). The questions were broken into two significant categories, Instructor Related (questions 1-3) and Course Related (questions 4-6). Data in these two categories were reviewed to determine major areas of concern (LeCompte, 2000, pp. 3-6). The major areas of concern were drawn from literature when possible and area additions or deletions were made based on researcher review. Areas drawn from literature included: Course Organization, Effective Communication, Group/Student Interaction, Instructor Interest/Enthusiasm, Rapport/Availability for Students, Methods of Presentation/Learning, Course Value, Interesting Material/Information, Breadth of Coverage, and Workload (Jackson, et al., 1999, pp. 7-8; Jirovec, et al., 1998, p. 4; Shannon & Twale, 1998, p. 446; Sheehan and Duprey, 1999, p. 3; Young & Shaw, 1999, p. 678). Areas created by the researcher based on respondent data included: Visual Aids, Instructor Knowledge, Instructor Physical Characteristics, Teaching Skill, and Other Students.

The review of tabulated responses produced significant areas of concern from the respondents. In the category of Instructor Related Questions, the areas of Course Organization, Visual Aids, Instructor Knowledge, and Instructor Physical Characteristics produced little concern from the respondents. The areas of Effective Communication, Group/Student Interaction, and Instructor Interest/Enthusiasm reflected average concern. The areas of greatest concern were Rapport/Availability, and Methods of Presentation/Learning. The low frequency of responses, to the areas of no concern, supported the notion that students and faculty are concerned about instructor characteristics. Furthermore, the areas of average and high concern

all produced low or no frequencies in the areas registering no concern. The only exception was the area of Methods of Presentation/Learning, which received six responses showing no concern for this area; however, this still represented a low concern when compared to the average response rate of 18.

In the category of Course Related Questions, the areas of Breadth of Coverage, Workload, and Instructor Physical Characteristics represented low concern. The areas of Teaching Skill, Course Value, Interesting Material/Information, Learning Environment, and Other Students represented average concern. The area of Course Organization was the only area to register high concern. The low frequency of responses, to the areas of no concern, supported the notion that students and faculty are concerned about course characteristics. Furthermore, the areas of average and high concern all produced low or no frequencies in the areas registering no concern. The exceptions were Course Organization and Learning Environment, which received frequencies of four and eight respectively.

As the eighth and final step to the methodology, the data was compared to the current mid-semester student evaluation of teaching (Appendix A) and a final report was completed to document the needs of the faculty and students. Questions one and two of the current evaluation represented good questions, as they respectively evaluate Group/Student Interaction and Rapport/Availability for Students. Question three was considered a poor question as it evaluates Instructor Knowledge, which did not emerge as a pressing need for students or faculty. Questions four and five were good questions as they evaluate Effective Communication and Course Value, both areas of average concern. Question six registered as a poor question, as Visual Aids did not produce great concern from the respondents. Questions seven and eight registered as good questions as they evaluate Course Organization, an area of high concern for

course related needs. While six of eight questions evaluated areas of concern, the current evaluation instrument was missing other areas. These included Methods of Presentation/Learning, Instructor Interest/Enthusiasm, Teaching Skill, Interesting Material/Information, Learning Environment, and Other Students.

There was one research question considered for this project. "Is the current student evaluation of teaching an effective measure of teaching quality as perceived by both students and faculty?" Based on a validated interview instrument, both students and faculty were interviewed to determine their needs. A great amount of information was accumulated from all the respondents, who spoke candidly and freely to the researcher. As a result, multiple areas of concern were determined for both instructor and course related categories. Upon extensive review of the data, the researcher determined that while the current mid-semester student evaluation of teaching represents a good foundation of assessment, it lacks vital areas of concern. In addition, it contains some questions, which do not produce desired information for either faculty or student populations. Overall, the instrument was determined to be a good foundation, but an ineffective measure of student and faculty needs.

Chapter 5

DISCUSSION, CONSLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Discussion

The results of this study support the current literature reviewed by the researcher. The inclusion of both faculty and student input proved successful and resulted in changes to the previous survey. Andrews (1997) found the inclusion of all parties important in his review of Total Quality Management techniques in academic environments (p. 1). Since the researcher is part of the faculty, the study provided students and fellow faculty an opportunity to share their concerns with the detachment staff (p. 2). This tenet is extremely important in alleviating the faculty concerns when implementing policy changes (p. 2).

The inclusion of both faculty and staff resulted in input similar to studies of student evaluations of teaching. Both students and instructors felt that course value, concern for students, and course organization were important factors in concluding a course or instructor is effective (Jackson, et al., 1999, pp. 7-8; Shannon & Twale, 1998, p. 446; Young & Shaw, 1999, p. 678). These factors were found important by all the studies above. Interview results also support the findings found in two of the three studies above. These include effective communication, group interaction, and enthusiasm (Shannon & Twale, 1998, p. 446; Young & Shaw, 1999, p. 678).

Wasserman (1999) stated that the classroom environment is a multifaceted environment that causes great anxiety for teachers (p. 2). This anxiety may result from lack of knowledge and feedback about what is effective. It is no wonder this study supported Rothwell (1996) in his conclusion that feedback is an important factor in the success of performance (p. 245). To alleviate the anxiety of teaching, instructors must receive consistent, timely, and informative

feedback. Once instructors are confident in their teaching abilities, they become more willing to take educational risks and create a more effective and interesting learning environment (Fritz & Miller-Heyl, 1995, p. 1). The important aspect here is the need for informative feedback. Students and teachers must operate together, sharing information resulting in total quality and total involvement (Andrews, 1997, p. 3).

Just as students and instructors retain opinions about effective teaching abilities and environments, this study supported the notion that they are just as willing to share those opinions, thereby expressing their needs. To accomplish this, a needs assessment returns results, which are both quantifiable and useful to an evaluator (Kemp, et al., 1998, p. 21; Varcoe, 1994, p. 9).

Both the formative and summative committees supported the use of a face-to-face interview to determine felt needs expressed by the stakeholders (Champion, 2000, p. 2; Kemp, et al., 1998, p. 23). The criteria designed with the formative committee and validated by the summative committee, were similar to the prevailing literature. Therefore, an interview designed as face-to-face (Kemp, et al., 1998, p. 23), seeking pertinent information (Dilley, 2000, pp. 1-2), and lacking bias (LeCompte, 2000, p. 1) was a paramount concern to the committees and researcher during this study. Furthermore, the conduct of the interview session displayed considerable attention by the literature and committees. The focus here resulted in criteria based on the environment and convenience (Dilley, 2000, p. 3) and the use of probing questions (Dilley, 2000, p. 4; King, 1997, pp. 2-3).

The process of research, which resulted in a valid interview instrument and data, strongly supported the literature at large. Input from the formative committee and validation by the summative committee added additional corroboration that the face-to-face interview process

perpetuates the accumulation of important data concerning effective learning among students. This is further substantiated when those students and faculty are participants in affecting that learning environment. Any evaluation system used to measure teaching and course effectiveness must endeavor to meet the variable needs of students who have a desire learn and the faculty who desire to teach them. To accomplish this feat, though, systems of evaluation must be built upon a fluid frame, which contorts to a copious populace, and is consistent with the ideals of continuous improvement (Osborne, 1998, p. 2).

Conclusions

In a world where compromises in quality lead to disastrous consequences in results, knowledge is a primary factor in success. This is found to be true on factory floors, department store shelves, and in university lectures. Customers demand quality, and research indicates they are willing to pay for it. Moreover, when they do not receive quality service or products, they either voice their dissatisfaction or leave their current supplier (Sellers, 1998, p. 200). In the educational community, universities are the providers of a product, namely education, and their customers are the students who pay for this product, in hope of obtaining skills, knowledge, and abilities that will improve their chances of obtaining a successful career. They pay great sums of money to obtain the knowledge that will guarantee a successful life. With such a prominent demand by the customer, why would anyone consider allowing an ineffective instructor to conduct an ineffective course that its customers, the students, paid for? This desire for quality is often the impetus for evaluating instructors as well as the courses they teach.

The desire for feedback is an important aspect in the performance of any employee. This is potentially more important when the job involves other people instead of inanimate products. Both students and teachers retain various opinions on what is important in the range of

educational feedback. Due to the variability in opinions, it is important to include input from all stakeholders. This ensures complete needs coverage for groups who differ in opinion. Often the greatest need is information. Not all instructors need continual training involving many hours away from work. Many just seek effective and frequent feedback from students and peers.

Beyond the need for stakeholder involvement, is the need to continuously evaluate program results. No program is perfect, thereby leaving room for improvement from the point of implementation. As departments create and implement new programs, evaluation should take a place at the top of the priority list, especially in the environment where teachers may have never taught before. Their anxieties are high enough, and without adequate feedback, those anxieties may spin out of control. One cannot underestimate the importance of providing teachers with adequate feedback from students who want input in their learning environment. Students demand better teachers, and teachers naturally want to provide the best for their students.

Implications

The assessed program of teaching evaluation discussed above will positively influence the detachment at the university and should result in improved instructor confidence and student development. A corrected mid-semester student evaluation of teaching, which is based on valid interview data and supported by academic research, will provide an effective method for determining the quality of instruction provided to the AFROTC cadets. This program meets the needs of both students and faculty, and the program's implications have the potential to reach far beyond meeting the evaluation needs of only the studied university's AFROTC detachment.

The use of an effective evaluation of teaching, based on the needs of instructors and students, will positively affect the success of the AFROTC Detachment at the university. The survey provides feedback to the instructors at the mid-point of each semester and the information

received includes aspects of both teaching technique and course success. Since the questions are built from student and instructor input, both major stakeholders will find opportunities to excel. Instructors will receive input on topics important to those receiving the instruction and the students are provided an opportunity to alter their educational environment. This may also foster closer educational relationships between student and instructor.

Outside the university's AFROTC Detachment, the potential for success extends to other AFROTC detachments as well. Through information sharing on the WWW, other detachments may learn how to create and utilize effective evaluations of teaching based on the needs of all stakeholders. This not only increases the quality of education at the studied university, but at hundreds of other universities nationwide.

Recommendations

It was recommended that the current mid-semester student evaluation of teaching receive the following changes. Remove questions three and six concerning Instructor Knowledge and Visual Aids respectively. In addition, the detachment should add questions concerning Presentation and Teaching Skill, Course Value, Material Interest, Instructor Enthusiasm, Other Students, and the Learning Environment. This will result in a net gain of four questions; however, they will provide a more effective measure of student and faculty need.

It was recommended that the corrected student evaluation of teaching receive a follow-on evaluation as soon as feasible. This evaluation is the responsibility for the education officer who consolidates all student evaluations of teaching. By reviewing past end-semester evaluations with the upcoming spring 2001 evaluations, a conclusion on the success of this evaluation study may be drawn.

Another recommendation was that the detachment ensures the student evaluation is continuously updated, possibly on an annual basis, to keep pace with changing educational theory and stakeholder needs. To accomplish this, the education officer should continue to review current literature and informally question both students and faculty. In conjunction with the feedback evaluation, annual program review will help maintain a high level of effectiveness and validity.

Finally, it was recommended that the detachment share this new information with other detachments around the nation. Beyond sharing the corrected evaluation form, the detachment should share the methods used in obtaining the questions. This will allow other detachments to successfully design evaluations based on the needs of their instructors and students.

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APPENDIXES

Appendix A

Current Mid-Semester Student Evaluation of Teaching

Aerospace Studies Academic Course Mid-Semester Evaluation of Teaching

The purpose of this evaluation is to let your instructor know how you feel the class is progressing at the semester mid-point. **This form is anonymous**, so be honest. Please answer the questions below and turn this form into your class instructor. **Thank you for helping make your class better.**

Please use the following scale in rating this course.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5

1. The instructor seeks active participation from students

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

2. The instructor is actively helpful when students have problems

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

3. The instructor is knowledgeable in the subject matter

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

4. The instructor speaks audibly and clearly

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

5. The instructor stimulates my thinking

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

6. The instructor effectively uses appropriate audio/visual and technology resources

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

7. The instructor organizes the class well

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

8. The course material (texts, handouts, etc.) enhance quality instruction

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

What do you like best about your AS Class so far?

What do you like least about your AS Class so far?

Appendix B

Description of Committee Members

Formative

Enrollment Counselor

Qualifications: This committee member is an instructor and counselor at a Community College. He currently provides admissions, enrollment processing and academic counseling for the college's business division, as well as high school and area business recruiting. He holds a Masters Degree in Education and Post-Masters work in Diploma School Counseling.

Purpose for selection: This individual currently teaches and advises undergraduate students, and has a direct understanding of what both instructors and students desire. His current studies in higher education bring the knowledge of research methods into the committee. His experience and training brings knowledgeable value to the evaluation process.

Method of selection: Telephone call to discuss project, and provision of proposal.

Director of Consumer Relationship Management

Qualifications: This committee member has extensive experience in the field of training and education. She has held many position of management in the areas of adult education and curriculum development. Her current work consistently requires her expert development and evaluation skills. She holds a Masters Degree in Teaching and Curriculum and a Doctorate in Adult Education.

Purpose for selection: This individual has held many academic and corporate positions requiring education evaluation skills. Her experience and training brings knowledgeable value to the evaluation process.

Method of selection: Telephone call to discuss project, and provision of proposal.

Summative

Associate Professor, Naval Science

Qualifications: This committee member is a Navy officer holding the rank of Commander. He is currently the Executive Officer for a Naval ROTC detachment at a private university. His years of military service predominately consist of time as a Naval Flight Officer flying the F-14 fighter aircraft. He has also held a variety of positions in personnel, training, and aircraft maintenance. He holds a Masters Degree in Education Curriculum and Instruction.

Purpose for selection: This committee member is knowledgeable of the military training environment as well as education theory. He brings both internal understanding as a military member and an external component holding a position outside the researcher's department.

Method of selection: Telephone call to discuss project, and provision of proposal.

Assistant Academic Dean

Qualifications: This committee member is an Assistant Dean involved with program development, assessment, curriculum and course offerings. In addition, he sits on the college's curriculum committee. He holds a Masters Degree in Theatre, and is currently pursuing a Doctorate in Higher Education.

Purpose for selection: This member was chosen due to his administrative role in higher education. He was chosen for his informed, but unbiased input potential.

Method of selection: Telephone call to discuss project, and provision of proposal.

Appendix C

Letter to Committee Members

1 Dec 99

MEMORANDUM FOR COMMITTEE MEMBERS

FROM: AFROTC DET/EO

SUBJECT: Study Committee Information

1. First off, thank you for volunteering to assist me with my current academic project. I appreciate the offer of your time and expertise during this part of my Doctoral program at Nova Southeastern University. Attached to this letter you will find a copy of my proposal explaining the details of my project. Please take a few moments to review it, as it will help you understand the reasons behind this project.

2. As part of my methodology, there will be two evaluative committees, formative and summative, both chaired by myself. Each will convene approximately three times, through e-mail, for the purpose of reviewing the progress of my project. In these sessions, you will each provide valuable feedback concerning criteria, format, and content. All contact will be through email in an effort to reduce your time requirements. Pertinent information on committee members is as follows:

Name	Committee
Enrollment Counselor	Formative
Director of Consumer Relationship Management	Formative
Assistant Academic Dean	Summative
Associate Professor of Naval Science	Summative

3. Once again, thank you for your help and guidance. I will be in touch soon. If you have further questions concerning this issue, contact me.

//SIGNED//

KEVIN C. SELLERS, Capt, USAF
 Assistant Professor, Aerospace Studies
 Education Officer

Attachment:
 Proposal

Appendix D

Letter of Informed Consent

MEMORANDUM FOR RESPONDENTS

FROM: AFROTC DET/EO

SUBJECT: Informed Consent Letter

Title: AN EVALUATION OF THE MID-SEMESTER STUDENT EVALUATION OF TEACHING AT A UNIVERSITY AIR FORCE RESERVE OFFICER TRAINING CORPS DETACHMENT

Investigator:

Kevin C. Sellers, Doctoral Student, Programs for Higher Education, Nova Southeastern University.

Institutional Review Board, Office of Grants and Contracts, Nova Southeastern University, (954) 262-5369

Description of the Study: The purpose of this study is to determine the most effective questions to utilize on the mid-semester student evaluations of teaching. Through the assistance of a formative and summative committee, the researcher will design an interview survey. The survey will be provided to faculty and student respondents to determine their needs as they relate to the current program. Greater detail of the study may be found in the proposal.

Risks and Benefits to the Participant: There are no expected risks to respondents.

Costs and Payments to the Participant: There is no expected cost to respondents. Committee members will not receive payment for services to this project other than a small gift of appreciation not to exceed \$5. Interview respondents will not receive payment for services to this project other than a candy gift of appreciation.

Confidentiality: Strict confidentiality will be maintained at all times throughout the course of the research project unless law requires disclosure. Committee office phone numbers, addresses, and email will be shared with the researcher and other committee members. Appropriate Nova Southeastern University faculty will also view them during evaluation of the report. Interview respondent information will not be shared.

Participant's Right to Withdraw from the Study: You may choose to not participate or to stop participation in the research program at any time without penalty.

Voluntary Consent by Participant: Participation in this research project is totally voluntary, and your consent is required before you can participate in the research program.

//SIGNED//

KEVIN C. SELLERS, Capt, USAF
Assistant Professor, Aerospace Studies
Education Officer

I have read the preceding consent form, or it has been read to me, and I fully understand the contents of this document and voluntarily consent to participate. All of my questions concerning the research have been answered. I hereby agree to participate in this research study. If I have any questions in the future about this study the investigator listed above will answer them. A copy of this form has been given to me.

Participant's Signature: _____ *Date:* _____

Witness's Signature: _____ *Date:* _____

Appendix E

First Contact with Formative Committee

Dear Formative Committee Members,

Thank you for participating in my current research project. Your guidance is a cornerstone of this project. As a group, you will determine the criteria for success.

Listed below are scenario type questions to help me determine the criteria for the interview instrument. Please answer the questions fully and honestly. I am looking for what you each feel will result in a successful interview instrument, not what you think I want to hear. You may consider this a brainstorming session, and no input will be rejected. Please do not feel like you must write a great deal of information (think quality over quantity). All input will be reviewed by myself, compared with current literature, and consolidated into a final list of criteria for the committee's approval.

An important point to understand is that I am concerned with your input on the best way to design and conduct the interview instrument as well as the appropriateness of the specific questions.

Some questions to help you focus, based on current literature, include but are not limited to:

1. Do the interview questions relate to the desired information?
2. How much time will the interview take?
3. How is the interview presented to the respondents?
4. Is the interview and analysis free from bias?

Please respond via email at your earliest convenience. I would like to submit a final list of criteria to you by 30 Oct 00.

Scenario Questions:

1. (Faculty Point of View) You are a current faculty member in undergraduate education and may have ideas what is important for successful learning. If you were asked to participate in an interview to share your knowledge, what would you expect from the faculty interviewer and instrument?
2. (Student point of view) You are an undergraduate student, with no training in teaching students. If you were asked to participate in an interview session, with a faculty member researching student evaluations, what would you expect from the interviewer and instrument?
3. (Administrator point of view) You are a department head, and you require a faculty member from your department to conduct interviews on creating student evaluations of teaching. What would you expect in relation to the interviewer and instrument?

Thank you for your time and effort. Please contact me with any questions you may have. This is still a committee and information may be freely exchanged.

V/R

Kevin C. Sellers
 KEVIN C. SELLERS, Capt, USAF
 Assistant Professor, Aerospace Studies
 Education Officer

Appendix F

Second Contact with Formative Committee

Dear Formative Committee Members,

Thank you for your effort in helping me determine the criteria for a successful interview instrument. Based on your input, and my review of related literature, I have designated the following criteria, which the instrument must meet for success.

Interview Instrument Criteria

The interview instrument must meet the following criteria for success, which are broken into the areas of design and conduct:

Design

1. The interview instrument is designed for use in a face-to-face setting between interviewer and respondent
2. The interview instrument is designed to obtain information pertaining to the needs of students and faculty in the area of teaching effectiveness
3. The interview questions must not contain language that may bias responses

Conduct

1. The interviewer creates a relaxed environment where the respondent may provide answers to the questions in confidence
2. The interview is provided at the respondent's convenience in consideration of time and location
3. The interview is conducted in a similar manner each time with probing questions added only to clarify responses

Now you each have an opportunity to review the above criteria, please respond in the following manner:

1. Approved with no changes
2. Approved with the following minor changes (list changes)
3. Not Approved, needs major changes (list needed corrections)

If the committee approves the criteria, I will create the instrument based on the above criteria. I will then submit the instrument to the formative committee for evaluation. After that evaluation, I will adjourn the formative committee.

If the committee does not approve the above criteria, I will make appropriate changes and resubmit them to the formative committee.

Please review the above carefully, as your input will determine the success of the interview instrument. If possible, please try to respond with your input by 7 November 2000 or earlier. If you have specific concerns, please contact me.

Once again, thank you for your continuing effort.

V/R

Kevin C. Sellers
 KEVIN C. SELLERS, Capt, USAF
 Assistant Professor, Aerospace Studies
 Education Officer

Appendix G
Interview Instrument Criteria

The interview instrument must meet the following criteria for success:

DESIGN

1. The interview instrument is designed for use in a face-to-face setting between interviewer and respondent
2. The interview instrument is designed to obtain information pertaining to the needs of students and faculty in the area of teaching effectiveness
3. The interview questions must not contain language that may bias responses

CONDUCT

1. The interviewer creates a relaxed environment where the respondent may provide answers to the questions in confidence
2. The interview is provided at the respondent's convenience in consideration of time and location
3. The interview is conducted in a similar manner each time with probing questions added only to clarify responses

Appendix H

Third Contact with Formative Committee

7 November 2000

MEMORANDUM FOR FORMATIVE COMMITTEE MEMBER

FROM: AFROTC DET/EO

SUBJECT: Review of Interview Instrument Draft

1. First, thank you for your assistance to this point; I appreciate the offer of your time and expertise. The final stage of the formative committee is at hand. It is now time for you to review the draft of the interview instrument. I have attached a copy of the instrument along with a feedback sheet. Please review the instrument, record your responses on the feedback sheet, and return the feedback sheet to me as an email attachment.

2. To assist you in your review I have included the criteria you approved. They are the basis on which you should review the interview instrument.

3. The interview instrument must meet the following criteria for success:

Design

- The interview instrument is designed for use in a face-to-face setting between interviewer and respondent
- The interview instrument is designed to obtain information pertaining to the needs of students and faculty in the area of teaching effectiveness
- The interview questions must not contain language that may bias responses

Conduct

- The interviewer creates a relaxed environment where the respondent may provide answers to the questions in confidence
- The interview is provided at the respondent's convenience in consideration of time and location
- The interview is conducted in a similar manner each time with probing questions added only to clarify responses

4. Once again, thank you for your help and guidance. Please return the feedback sheet to me by 13 Nov 00, if possible. If you have further questions contact me.

//SIGNED//

KEVIN C. SELLERS, Capt, USAF
Assistant Professor, Aerospace Studies
Education Officer

Attachments:

1. Interview Instrument
2. Feedback Sheet

Appendix I

Interview Instrument

Interview Protocol: Conduct the interview at the convenience of the respondent. When interviewing faculty members, conduct the session in their office, or in the department's conference room. When interviewing students, conduct the session in the department's conference room. Conduct the interview in a similar manner during each face-to-face interview session. Read the questions as written, and only pose further questions to clarify responses (never provide possible answers to respondents). Utilize hand-written notes as well as a tape recorder to tabulate responses.

Personal Information

1. Is respondent a Student or Instructor?
2. In which Academic Year is respondent involved?

Interview Questions

1. What teaching techniques would make you conclude that an instructor is a good teacher?
2. What teaching techniques would make you conclude that an instructor is a poor teacher?
3. What teaching techniques would not alter your opinion of the instructor's teaching ability?
4. What aspects of the Air Force ROTC course, other than teaching technique, would make you conclude that the course was good?
5. What aspects of the Air Force ROTC course, other than teaching technique, would make you conclude that the course was poor?
6. What aspects of the Air Force ROTC course, other than teaching technique, would not alter your opinion of the course?

Appendix J

Committee Feedback Form**Committee Feedback Form**

Directions: Add your comments as necessary. I will make changes based on your input if needed. Upon completing the form, delete the two choices, under the recommendation section, that do not apply. Then, attach this document to an email and return it to me.

Input on instrument's effectiveness in meeting criteria:**Input on the questions (type and wording):****Input on the method of interview conduct:****General comments:****Recommendation (please retain choice and delete others):**

Approved (no changes)

Approved (consider above changes)

Not Approved

Appendix K

Contact with Summative Committee

16 November 00

MEMORANDUM FOR SUMMATIVE COMMITTEE MEMBER

FROM: AFROTC DET/EO

SUBJECT: Summative Review of Interview Instrument

1. First, thank you for participating in my research project; I appreciate the offer of your time and expertise. The final stage of the project is at hand. It is now time for the summative committee to review the final draft of the interview instrument. I have attached a copy of the instrument along with a feedback sheet. Please review the instrument, record your responses on the feedback sheet, and return the feedback sheet to me as an email attachment.
2. To assist you in your review I have included the criteria approved by the formative committee. They are the basis on which you should review and validate the interview instrument. The design of the program should meet the stated criteria. Please make any comments about the instrument on the feedback sheet.
3. The interview instrument must meet the following criteria for success:

Design

- The interview instrument is designed for use in a face-to-face setting between interviewer and respondent
- The interview instrument is designed to obtain information pertaining to the needs of students and faculty in the area of teaching effectiveness
- The interview questions must not contain language that may bias responses

Conduct

- The interviewer creates a relaxed environment where the respondent may provide answers to the questions in confidence
 - The interview is provided at the respondent's convenience in consideration of time and location
 - The interview is conducted in a similar manner each time with probing questions added only to clarify responses
4. Once again, thank you for your help and guidance. Please return the feedback sheet to me by 22 Nov 00, if possible. If you have further questions contact me.

//SIGNED//

KEVIN C. SELLERS, Capt, USAF
Assistant Professor, Aerospace Studies
Education Officer

Attachments:

1. Interview Instrument
2. Feedback Sheet

Appendix L

Tabulation of Results

Question 1	Instructor	Students
Freshman	Communicates knowledge effectively ² , enthusiasm ⁴ , subject knowledge ⁸ , active student involvement ³	1. Knows material⁸, real-life experiences⁷ interested in subject, other students speak well of instructor⁴, teaches in learning style similar to students⁷, reviews material⁷, helps students remember material⁷, accessible⁵, students comfortable with talking to instructor⁵ 2. Listens to students³, allows class input³, interactive³, gets students interested⁴, visual aids⁶, relates to students⁵, understands what students need to learn⁷
Sophomore	Utilizes questioning ³ , discussions ⁷ , effective movement ² , enthusiasm ⁴ , allows class participation ³	1. Class involvement³, does not read from book⁷, class participation and interaction³, attention step⁷, makes material easy to learn⁷, utilizes group projects⁷, reviews at end of class period⁷ 2. Various assignments⁷, work one-on-one with students⁵, gets to know students⁵, multiple examples⁷, enthusiastic⁴
Junior	Not evaluated Researcher is junior instructor	1. Expresses difficult concepts well², lectures but allows student interaction³, shares learning³, two-way teaching/learning³, fun personality⁴ 2. Knowledge of material⁸, real-life examples⁷, availability⁵, approachable⁵, encourages questions in class³, positive and upbeat atmosphere in class⁴, interested and excited about material⁴, concerned with students' progress⁵
Senior	Clear communicator ² , well prepared ¹ , organized ¹ , motivated ⁴ , creates stimulating environment ⁷ , uses a variety of support for objectives ⁷ , uses guest speakers ⁷ , uses external reference ⁷ , uses personal experiences ⁷ , balances need to present material through lecture and interactive methods ⁷	1. Knows material⁸, does not solely follow book⁷, uses language familiar to students², life examples⁷, handouts⁶, available to help⁵, encourages use of office hours⁵, makes students feel comfortable⁵, answers questions⁵, compassionate communication skills⁵, reviews subject after each class⁷ 2. Uses discussion⁷, begins with lecture then discusses material⁷, uses relevant slides⁶, available⁵, works out problems in class⁷

Question 2	Instructor	Students
Freshman	Poor eye contact ² , turns back to students ² , lacks knowledge of subject ⁸ , no organization ¹	1. Not interested in material ⁴ , lacks knowledge of material or requisite training ⁸ , too friendly with students ⁵ , teaches below knowledge level of students ⁷ , teaches to "dumbest" student ⁷ , treats students like children ⁵ 2. Teaches at instructors knowledge level-not students ⁷ , monotone ² , slow pace ²
Sophomore	Reading book or lesson plan ⁷ , poor eye contact ² , no emotion ⁴	1. Lacks enthusiasm ⁴ , just reads material ⁷ , one-way communication ³ , lacks eye-contact ² , does not know students names ⁵ , lacks accessibility ⁵ 2. No motivation ⁴ , boring ⁴ , overuses examples ⁷ , talks down to students ⁵ , talks above students ⁵ , "babies" students ⁵ , talks to the board ² , does not address questions ³ , inattentive to students ⁵
Junior	Not evaluated Researcher is junior instructor	1. Verbal pauses (ums and ahs) ² , does not care about students ⁵ , does not accept feedback from students ⁵ 2. Lack knowledge of material ⁸ , must rely on notes or slides ⁸ , trouble conveying message ² , does not vary teaching methods ⁷ , uses technical terms ²
Senior	Difficulty communicating information ² , difficulty relating to students ² , not organized ¹ , regimented presentation ⁷ , lacks humor, perspective, and animation ⁴ , does not allow free-flow of ideas ³ , concerned over "ratings" more than presenting material ⁴	1. Only follows book ⁷ , teaches too quickly ² , monotone ² , not enthusiastic ⁴ , late for class ¹ , does not know student names ⁵ , does not allow student questions ³ , embarrasses student who ask questions ⁵ , not available ⁵ 2. No background material given to introduce topics ⁷ , forces students to respond to questions ³ , expects same enthusiasm for subject from students as teacher may have ⁴ , pure lecture ⁷ , reads from notes ⁷ , no personal experiences presented ⁷

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Question 3	Instructor	Students
Freshman	Dresses professionally ⁹ , timeliness ¹ , utilizes audio visual methods ⁶	1. Book or assignments required by department and beyond instructors control ¹ 2. Methods of class preparation ¹ , method of presentation ⁷
Sophomore	Utilizes audio visual methods ⁶ , excessive movement ²	1. Ideals surrounding curriculum ¹ , method of instruction ⁷ , cultural accent ⁹ , slang terms ² 2. Visual aid quality ⁶
Junior	Not evaluated Researcher is junior instructor	1. Appearance ⁹ , race ⁹ , gender ⁹ 2. Appearance ⁹ , gender ⁹
Senior	Method of approaching lesson presentation ⁷ , way class is organized (as long as it's organized) ¹ , choice of teaching method ⁷ , personality traits (humor) ⁹	1. Only covers exam material ⁷ , does not present material in depth ⁷ 2. Using standardized slides ⁶

Question 4	Instructor	Students
Freshman	Topics narrowed to objectives ¹ , real-life scenarios ³ , mid-day timeframe ⁶	1. Students know material ² , good teaching ² , able to use material ³ , interesting and relevant to students ⁴ , various topics ⁵ 2. What students learn ⁵ , outside reading assigned ⁵ , various activities to apply material ³ , various teaching methods applied ²
Sophomore	Organization ¹ , fair quantity of material ⁸ , good test questions ¹	1. Relaxed environment ⁶ , student get along and help each other ⁷ , other students can be relied upon ⁷ 2. Material presented ⁴ , how well students remember material ² , content ⁵ , group presentations ² , hands-on ² , how well instructor teaches ² , organized and efficient ¹
Junior	Not evaluated Researcher is junior instructor	1. Point of view of instructor and text ¹ , reflects various viewpoints ¹ , material relates to future ³ 2. Material can be applied ³ , relevant material ³
Senior	Objectives are appropriate for students level of learning ¹ , lesson plans are a good foundation ¹ , enough time allotted to teach material ⁶	1. Interesting material ⁴ , material has importance in life ³ , keeps students awake ² , energetic students ⁷ , students left interested ⁴ 2. Material relates to future needs ³ , material is specific in nature ⁵

Question 5	Instructor	Students
Freshman	Typos in text and handouts ¹ , poor room aesthetics ⁶	1. Students do not like instructor ⁷ , not designed around student learning styles ¹ , not taught to learning style of majority of students ² , early in morning or late at night ⁶ , poor text ¹ , too much work ⁸ 2. Not enough instruction to ensure understanding ² , type and location of room ⁶
Sophomore	Poor textbook ¹ , lack of human interest ³	1. Outside distractions ⁷ , student personalities brought into classroom ⁷ , boring or long subject matter ⁴ , class length too long ⁶ , difficult location and time in relation to other courses ⁶ 2. Students cannot remember material ² , poor teaching technique ²
Junior	Not evaluated Researcher is junior instructor	1. Teaching format ² , students do not respect instructor ⁷ 2. Material not relevant ³ , unorganized ¹ , lacks plan or objectives ¹
Senior	Material not current ¹ , no technology utilized in class teaching (i.e. multimedia) ⁶	1. Boring material ⁴ , not informative ³ , opinionated material counter to student beliefs ⁴ 2. Book and class do not connect ¹ , Book material does not apply to lesson objectives ¹ , lacks real-life material ³ , lacks information relevant for future planning ³

Question 6	Instructor	Students
Freshman	Temperature ⁶ , room arrangement ⁶	1. Stated all things will register good or bad 2. Time of class ⁶ , number of students ⁶ , day of week ⁶ , type of visual aid ⁶
Sophomore	Amount of material (if deletions can be made) ⁸	1. Substitute instructors ¹ , altering time of tests or quizzes ¹ , surprise speaker ¹ , uniform wear ¹ 2. Size of class ⁶
Junior	Not evaluated Researcher is junior instructor	1. Race or gender of instructor ⁹ 2. Time of class ⁶ , what is covered (as long as material is relevant) ⁵
Senior	Stated all things will register good or bad	1. Uninteresting required course ⁴ 2. History material included ⁵

Appendix M

Frequency of Results

Note: Areas are numbered. The numbers appear as superscripts in Appendix L, thus providing information on what responses were counted in each area below.

Category of Instructor Related Questions (questions 1-3)

Areas Registering Concern (questions 1-2)			
Area	Frequency	Average	+/- From Average
1. Course Organization	5	18	-13
2. Effective Communication	19	18	+1
3. Group/Student Interaction	17	18	-1
4. Instructor Interest/Enthusiasm	18	18	0
5. Rapport/Availability for Students	27	18	+9
6. Visual Aids	3	18	-15
7. Methods of Presentation/Learning	39	18	+21
8. Instructor Knowledge	8	18	-10
9. Instructor Physical Characteristics	0	18	-18

Areas Registering No Concern (question 3)			
Area	Frequency	Average	+/- From Average
1. Course Organization	5	18	-13
2. Effective Communication	2	18	-16
3. Group/Student Interaction	0	18	-18
4. Instructor Interest/Enthusiasm	0	18	-18
5. Rapport/Availability for Students	0	18	-18
6. Visual Aids	4	18	-14
7. Methods of Presentation/Learning	6	18	-12
8. Instructor Knowledge	0	18	-18
9. Instructor Physical Characteristics	8	18	-10

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Category of Course Related Questions (questions 4-6)

Areas Registering Concern (questions 4-5)			
Area	Frequency	Average	+/- From Average
1. Course Organization	17	10	+7
2. Teaching Skill	13	10	+3
3. Course Value	13	10	+3
4. Interesting Material/Information	7	10	-3
5. Breadth of Coverage	5	10	-5
6. Learning Environment	9	10	-1
7. Other Students	7	10	-3
8. Workload	2	10	-8
9. Instructor Physical Characteristics	0	10	-10

Areas Registering Concern (question 6)			
Area	Frequency	Average	+/- From Average
1. Course Organization	4	10	-6
2. Teaching Skill	0	10	-10
3. Course Value	0	10	-10
4. Interesting Material/Information	1	10	-9
5. Breadth of Coverage	2	10	-8
6. Learning Environment	8	10	-2
7. Other Students	0	10	-10
8. Workload	1	10	-9
9. Instructor Physical Characteristics	1	10	-9

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